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8 THINGS TO KNOW

Pivotal witness testifies in impeachment probe

William Taylor offered key impeachment testimony.

Acting U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Bill Taylor arrives to testify at a closed-door deposition as part of the U.S. House of Representatives impeachment inquiry. REUTERS

As another key career diplomat witness appeared on Tuesday in the impeachment inquiry into U.S. President Donald Trump's dealings with Ukraine, Trump called himself the victim of a "lynching," a comment that dredged up a painful chapter in race relations and was swiftly condemned by numerous lawmakers.

William Taylor, who as the charge d'affaires is the top U.S. envoy in Ukraine, walked past journalists without answering questions as he made his way into the U.S. Capitol for closed-door testimony to the three Democratic-led House of Representatives committees leading the inquiry.

Taylor's appearance marks another pivotal development in the political drama unfolding in Washington – focusing on Republican Trump's request to Ukraine to investigate Democratic political rival Joe Biden – that threatens Trump's presidency even as he pursues re-election in 2020.

Trump, a day after calling on his fellow Republicans to get tougher in defending him in the inquiry, inflamed the controversy by writing on Twitter, "All Republicans must remember what they are witnessing here – a lynching. But we will WIN!"

African American lawmakers and others denounced Trump for the remark because of the past U.S. history of lynching of black people, particularly in formerly pro-slavery Southern states.

"Lynching is a reprehensible stain on this nation's history, as is this President. We'll never erase the pain and trauma of lynching, and to invoke that torture to whitewash your own corruption is disgraceful," Senator Kamala Harris, a Democratic presidential contender, wrote on Twitter.

> **"Lynching is a reprehensible stain on this nation's history, as is this President. We'll never erase the pain and trauma of lynching, and to invoke that torture to whitewash your own corruption is disgraceful."**
>
> Senator Kamala Harris

But Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, whose home state of South Carolina has a large black population, defended Trump's language, saying that "this is a lynching in every sense. This is un-American."

Trump's administration has not cooperated in the impeachment inquiry, seeking to block testimony and documents. The House Intelligence Committee issued a subpoena to compel Taylor's testimony after the State Department had directed him not to appear, an official said.

The House is focusing on Trump's request during a July 25 telephone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky that he investigate former vice president Biden and Biden's son Hunter. Biden is a leading contender for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination to face Trump. Hunter Biden had served on the board of a Ukrainian energy company.

Trump made his request – described by Democrats as an improper invitation for foreign interference in an American election – after withholding $391 million in security aid approved by the U.S. Congress to help combat Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine. Zelensky agreed to the request. The aid was later released.

Taylor mentioned his concern about withholding U.S. aid on Sept. 9 to Kurt Volker, the State Department's then special envoy to Ukraine, and Gordon Sondland, the U.S. ambassador to the European Union, in a text message provided to investigators and later made public.

"As I said on the phone, I think it's crazy to withhold security assistance for help with a political campaign," Taylor wrote.

Taylor was tapped to serve as charge d'affaires in Kiev, where he had served as U.S. ambassador from 2006 to 2009, after Trump in May abruptly removed Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch. Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani had portrayed her as resisting his efforts to push Ukraine to investigate the Bidens.

Yovanovitch testified in the impeachment inquiry on Oct. 11.

Trump has denied any wrongdoing and accused Democrats of trying to oust him to prevent him from being re-elected.

Trump's lynching remark was his latest racially tinged comment, coming two years after he said there were "very fine people on both sides" after clashes at a rally by white nationalists in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Hakeem Jeffries, chairman of the House Democratic caucus, urged Trump to apologize for his comment. REUTERS

Pound falls against dollar, euro after Brexit rejection

2 The British pound fell against the dollar and the euro after UK lawmakers on Tuesday rejected the government's proposed timetable for passing legislation to ratify its Brexit deal. Against the dollar, the pound was last down 0.40% to $1.281, off the 5-1/2 month highs hit earlier in the session on optimism about the deal. Against the euro, the pound was last down 0.24%, to 0.862. The vote

REUTERS

leaves Prime Minister Boris Johnson's vow to leave the European Union by the end of the month in doubt. REUTERS

Teen wounded in shooting near CA high school

4 Police said a possible suspect has been apprehended after a person was shot and wounded on Tuesday just outside a high school in Santa Rosa, California. All school lockdowns had been lifted and there was no evidence the weapon was on campus, authorities said on Twitter. Santa Rosa police called the shooting an "isolated" incident just beyond the walls of Ridgway High School, and said there were no further reports of violence on the campus. One person was wounded in the shooting and receiving medical treatment, police said. The victim, identified as a 17-year-old juvenile, was in stable condition at a local hospital after suffering a gunshot wound to the abdomen, Captain John Cregan of Santa Rosa police told a news conference. Santa Rosa, a city of nearly 180,000 people, is about 50 miles (80 km) north of San Francisco. REUTERS

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Elizabeth Warren is rallying alongside the striking teachers. REUTERS

Presidential hopeful Warren rallies with Chicago teachers as strike enters fourth day

Warren, a former teacher, expressed her solidarity.

Presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren, a Democrat, rallied with striking Chicago teachers on Tuesday, expressing support for the union's demands as the country's third-largest school system entered a fourth day of canceled classes.

Warren, a Massachusetts senator and former teacher, joined a crowd of hundreds of teachers and parents outside an elementary school to back the Chicago teachers' demands for more resources, and promised to boost funding for U.S. public schools if elected president in 2020.

"I'm here to stand with every one of the people who stand for our children every day," Warren said to thunderous applause and cheers.

The teacher's union called the work stoppage last week after contract negotiations failed to produce a deal on pay, overcrowding in schools and a lack of support staff such as nurses and social workers.

Warren, a leading progressive voice for the Democrats, is one of the top contenders aiming to secure her party's presidential nomination and face off in next year's U.S. election against President Donald Trump.

Her campaign proposals include making an $800 billion investment in public schools and canceling all student loan debt.

Sergio Criollo, a bilingual teacher who attended the rally, said he was encouraged by Warren's appearance.

"The fact that presidential candidates are seeing what we are doing hopefully we will create a movement here in Illinois and other states," Criollo said.

About 300,000 students have been out of school since Thursday when the system's 25,000 teachers went on strike.

The strike is the latest in a wave of work stoppages in U.S. school districts, in which demands for resources have superseded calls for higher salaries and benefits. In Chicago and elsewhere, teachers have emphasized the need to help underfunded schools, framing their demands as a call for social justice.

On Tuesday, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot said she was frustrated that part of the teachers' union bargaining team was taking the day off from negotiations to partake in rallies. She has called for the union to end the strike and make a deal with the Chicago Public Schools (CPS).

"There should be a sense of urgency," she said. "We have been making progress, not enough, not fast enough."

Union President Jesse Sharkey said on Monday Lightfoot's proposal only addresses 20% of overcrowded classes and that her support-staff proposals do not adequately meet the needs of the district.

With no end to negotiations in sight, teachers were planning to rally in downtown Chicago during rush hour on Wednesday morning, Union President Jesse Sharkey told reporters.

Lightfoot, who was elected in April, said the district offered a raise for teachers of 16% over five years, but could not afford the union's full demands, which would cost an extra $2.4 billion annually.

Although the latest work stoppage has forced officials to cancel classes and sports events, school buildings are staying open for children in need of a place to go. REUTERS

U.S. senators want social media users to be able to take their data with them

Republican and Democratic senators unite on issue.

REUTERS

Three U.S. lawmakers active in tech issues introduced a bill on Tuesday that would require social networks like Facebook to allow users to pack up their data and go elsewhere, they said in a statement.

The senators, Republican Josh Hawley and Democrats Mark Warner and Richard Blumenthal, offered the bill at a time when there is growing concern that Facebook, along with Alphabet's Google, have become so powerful that smaller rivals are unable to lure away their users.

The bill currently does not have a counterpart in the U.S. House of Representatives, which it will need to become law.

The bill would require communications platforms with more than 100 million monthly active members – Facebook has more than two billion – to allow its users to easily move, or port, their data to another network, Warner's office said in a statement.

Under the bill the companies would be required to maintain an interface to facilitate interoperability. Or users would be allowed to choose another company to manage a user's account settings, content, and online interactions, the statement said.

> **"Data portability will inevitably endanger data security. Online hackers and criminals looking to steal consumer data will benefit."**
> Carl Szabo

Portability means that a user who is unhappy with Facebook, for example, would be able to pull postings, comments and photos off Facebook and move them to another site. Interoperability means that users on different platforms – say Facebook and Twitter – would be able to communicate in the same way as email users are able to email to anyone without regard to provider.

The trade group NetChoice, which counts Google and Facebook among its members, said that the bill would do little to protect consumers.

"Data portability will inevitably endanger data security," said Carl Szabo, general counsel at NetChoice. "Online hackers and criminals looking to steal consumer data will benefit."

The idea of portability, which is already part of European law, has the support of Representative David Cicilline, a Democrat who leads the House Judiciary Committee's antitrust subcommittee.

Data portability has been promoted as giving consumers the power to move their data, which could spur the growth of social media alternatives that offer features such as greater privacy or less advertising.

Facebook has been hit by a number of privacy-related issues recently, including a glitch that exposed to its employees the passwords of millions of users which had been stored in readable format within its internal systems. The social media giant is also under strict data protections imposed by the company's $5 billion settlement with the Federal Trade Commission. REUTERS

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Liberal leader and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. GETTY IMAGES

Canada's Trudeau clings to power; must court left after losing popular vote

Trudeau overcame blackface and corruption scandals.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau hung onto power after a tight election on Monday that saw his government reduced to a minority, results that will likely push his agenda to the left while alienating energy producing provinces.

Trudeau, one of the world's most prominent progressive politicians, struggled with domestic scandals. He now looks set to govern with support from the left-leaning New Democrats, who have 24 seats.

His Liberals did not win any seats in the oil-rich provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The party was leading or elected in 157 seats, a decrease of 20, preliminary results showed.

Minority governments in Canada rarely last more than 2-1/2 years. Although the New Democrats lost 16 seats, leader Jagmeet Singh is positioned to press for action on priorities such as more social spending and increased action on climate change.

One senior Liberal noted that many legislators need to serve another two years to meet the six-year requirement for a Parliamentary pension.

"That gives us a pretty free hand for that period," said the Liberal, who requested anonymity given the sensitivity of the matter.

The New Democrats struck deals to help keep Liberal minority governments in power from 1972-1974 and in 2005.

Together the two parties can muster a majority 180 seats in the 338-seat House of Commons.

The election was a disappointment for Conservative leader Andrew Scheer, whose party gained seats but not the majority it had sought.

The Canadian dollar weakened against the greenback on Tuesday and the heavily-weighted energy sector fell on the Toronto stock market, as investors worried that a minority government would make it more difficult to build new oil pipelines.

> **"This truly is the worst possible outcome."**
>
> Tim Pickering, chief executive of Auspice Capital Advisers

Trudeau visited Montreal's subway, posing for selfies with commuters early on Tuesday, an echo of 2015 when he did the same thing.

This win was different. But Trudeau barely mentioned the loss of his majority when he spoke to supporters early on Tuesday, saying he had "a clear mandate" for a progressive agenda and more action to combat global warming.

This is unlikely to please the western provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, which cast out every Liberal legislator amid anger over what the energy industry sees as overly stringent environmental rules.

Canada's oil sands, home to the world's third-largest crude reserves, lie entirely within Alberta. The energy sector accounts for 11% of Canadian GDP.

"This truly is the worst possible outcome," said Tim Pickering, chief executive of Auspice Capital Advisers, which manages a Canadian crude oil exchange-traded fund. REUTERS

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Sexual predator sought after assaulting 2 teens

Cops need the public's help finding the suspect.

BECCA GLASSER-BAKER
Rebecca.Glasser@metro.us

Philadelphia police want help locating a man accused of sexually assaulting two teenagers after they stepped off a bus in the Oxford Circle neighborhood.

The first incident involving the suspect occurred on October 15, at around 12:15 a.m, according to a report by CBS. The incident happened in the 1200 block of Levick Street, where an 18-year-old woman walked west after getting off a SEPTA route 14 bus. The woman got off at Levick Street and Bustleton Avenue and was followed and approached from behind by the suspect.

It was reported that the man led her to a rear driveway in the 1200 block of Elbridge Street. That's when he allegedly assaulted her, took her phone, and fled the scene.

The suspect is described as an African American man between 20 to 25 years of age; he is about 5 foot 8 inches with a dark complexion. He was wearing a black hooded sweatshirt during the first incident.

The second incident occurred on October 21 at 10:30 p.m. A 16-year-old girl exited a SEPTA 14 bus at Levick Street and Bustleton Avenue. It was reported that an African American man approached her from behind and pulled the victim's jacket over her face. The suspect allegedly pushed her into an alley and told her not to make any noise then sexually assaulted her, took her phone, and fled. That suspect was described as having a large build, wearing grey sweatpants, white socks, and black slide shoes.

An image of the suspect.
PHILLY POLICE BLOG

Police believe the same man is responsible for both assaults.

Anyone with information about these crimes can contact the Philly PD special victims unit at 215-685-3264 or the tip line at 215.686.TIPS (8477) or text a tip to PPD TIP or 773847. Tips can also be sent via an online form at Phillypolice.com. All tips are confidential.

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Loughlin among parents, others facing new charges in U.S. college admissions scandal

Actress Lori Loughlin and her husband, Mossimo Giannulli. REUTERS

Federal prosecutors on Tuesday said they had brought additional charges against 18 wealthy parents, former university athletic officials and others accused of participating in the largest U.S. college admissions scam ever uncovered.

Among those facing new charges are 11 parents including "Full House" star Lori Loughlin, who federal prosecutors in Boston say conspired to bribe University of Southern California employees to secure the admission of her two daughters.

She and her husband, fashion designer Mossimo Giannulli, were previously charged with committing mail and wire fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering. They now face a new charge of conspiring to commit federal program bribery.

The new charges contained in the revised indictment filed against them and the other parents adds to the potential maximum prison terms they each face if convicted. All 11 parents have previously pleaded not guilty and are awaiting trial.

Lawyers for Loughlin and Giannulli did not respond to requests for comment.

They are among 52 people charged with participating in a vast scheme in which wealthy parents conspired with a California college admissions consultant to use bribery and other forms of fraud to secure the admission of their children to top schools.

William "Rick" Singer, the consultant, pleaded guilty in March to charges he facilitated cheating on college entrance exams and helped bribe sports coaches at universities to present his clients' children as fake athletic recruits.

Celebrities and top executives were among the 35 parents charged in relation to the scandal, including "Desperate Housewives" star Felicity Huffman, who last week began serving a 14-day prison term after pleading guilty. REUTERS

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Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan talks during a news conference at Esenboga International Airport in Ankara, Turkey, October 22, 2019. REUTERS

Putin, Erdogan strike deal to remove Kurdish YPG from Syria border

Deal builds on the soon-to-expire U.S.-brokered truce.

Syrian and Russian forces will deploy in northeast Syria to remove Kurdish YPG fighters and their weapons from the border with Turkey under a deal agreed on Tuesday which both Moscow and Ankara hailed as a triumph.

The agreement expands on a U.S.-brokered truce which was set to expire late on Tuesday and underlines the dizzying changes in Syria since President Donald Trump announced a U.S. troop withdrawal two weeks ago, ahead of Turkey's cross-border offensive.

Tuesday's deal endorses the return of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's forces to the border alongside Russian troops, replacing the Americans who had patrolled the region for years with their former Kurdish allies.

Under the agreement between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkey's Tayyip Erdogan, the two countries said Russian military police and Syrian border guards would start removing the YPG 30 km (19 miles) from the Turkish border on Wednesday.

Six days later, Russian and Turkish forces will jointly start to patrol a narrower, 10 km strip of land in the "safe zone" that Ankara has long sought in northeast Syria.

After six hours of talks with Erdogan in the Black Sea resort of Sochi, Putin expressed satisfaction at decisions he described as "very important, if not momentous, to resolve what is a pretty tense situation which has developed on the Syrian-Turkish border".

A senior Turkish official described it as an "excellent" deal which would achieve Turkey's long-held goal of a border strip cleared of the YPG, which Ankara regards as a terrorist organization because of its links to insurgents inside Turkey.

Last week's U.S.-brokered deal, due to expire at 1900 GMT on Tuesday, was limited the central part of the border strip between the Syrian towns of Tel Abyad and Ras al Ain, where Turkish forces had focused their military offensive.

Under the deal with Moscow, the length of border which the YPG would be required to pull back from is more than three times the size of the territory covered by the U.S.-Turkish accord, covering most of the area Turkey had wanted to include.

"The outcome of the Putin-Erdogan meeting in Sochi today indicates that Erdogan has become a master of leveraging the U.S. and Russia against each other to maximize Ankara's gains," Soner Cagaptay, director of the Turkish program at the Washington Institute said in a tweet.

"Turkey got the safe zone it wanted all this time."

Just minutes before Erdogan and Putin announced their deal, a senior U.S. administration official said the commander of Kurdish forces in northeast Syria told the United States he had met all obligations set out in the U.S.-brokered truce.

An official from the Syrian Democratic Forces later said the SDF commander "confirms that the SDF have withdrawn from ceasefire zone".

Turkey says 765 terrorists but no civilians have been killed in its offensive. REUTERS

"The outcome of the Putin-Erdogan meeting in Sochi today indicates that Erdogan has become a master of leveraging the U.S. and Russia against each other to maximize Ankara's gains."

Soner Cagaptay

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Security forces arrest 31 cartel suspects in raid on Mexico City drug labs

ISTOCK

Security forces arrested 31 suspected cartel members on Tuesday in a raid on a warren of clandestine tunnels and alleged drug laboratories in Mexico City, authorities said.

Government officials said dozens of police and security force members swooped down on buildings in the central Tepito neighborhood of Mexico City, long known for its contraband activity.

Videos on Twitter purportedly of the raid showed soldiers in battle gear brandishing assault rifles alongside armored vehicles and police trucks blocking an intersection and highway before dawn.

Omar Garcia, Mexico City's public security secretary, said two laboratories used to produce synthetic drugs and 50 kg (110.23 lb) of chemical precursors were seized during the raid.

More than two tons of marijuana and 20 kilos of cocaine were also seized, he said, along with an unspecified amount of money and a weapons cache that included rocket launchers and grenades.

Speaking at a press conference, Garcia said the raid led to the arrest of 31 people. The Union cartel and other criminal groups have operated in Tepito for years. In his remarks, Garcia referred only to an unnamed gang.

"This ministry learned of collusion between this criminal group and authorities from Mexico City ... the decision was made to act fast," said Garcia, who gave no details.

The show of force comes as the government has faced criticism after back-to-back outbreaks of spectacular acts of violence last week. These included a rampage by cartel gunmen during the attempted arrest of a drug lord's son and a gunfight that killed 13 police officers.

Mexico sent special forces on Monday to patrol the northern city of Culiacan after the citywide assault by gunmen that led authorities to free Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman's son in a storm of bullets.

Eleven caches of drugs stashed in liquor stores and at least two underground tunnels controlled by the Union cartel were uncovered in the raid. REUTERS

Musk's satellite project testing encrypted internet with military planes

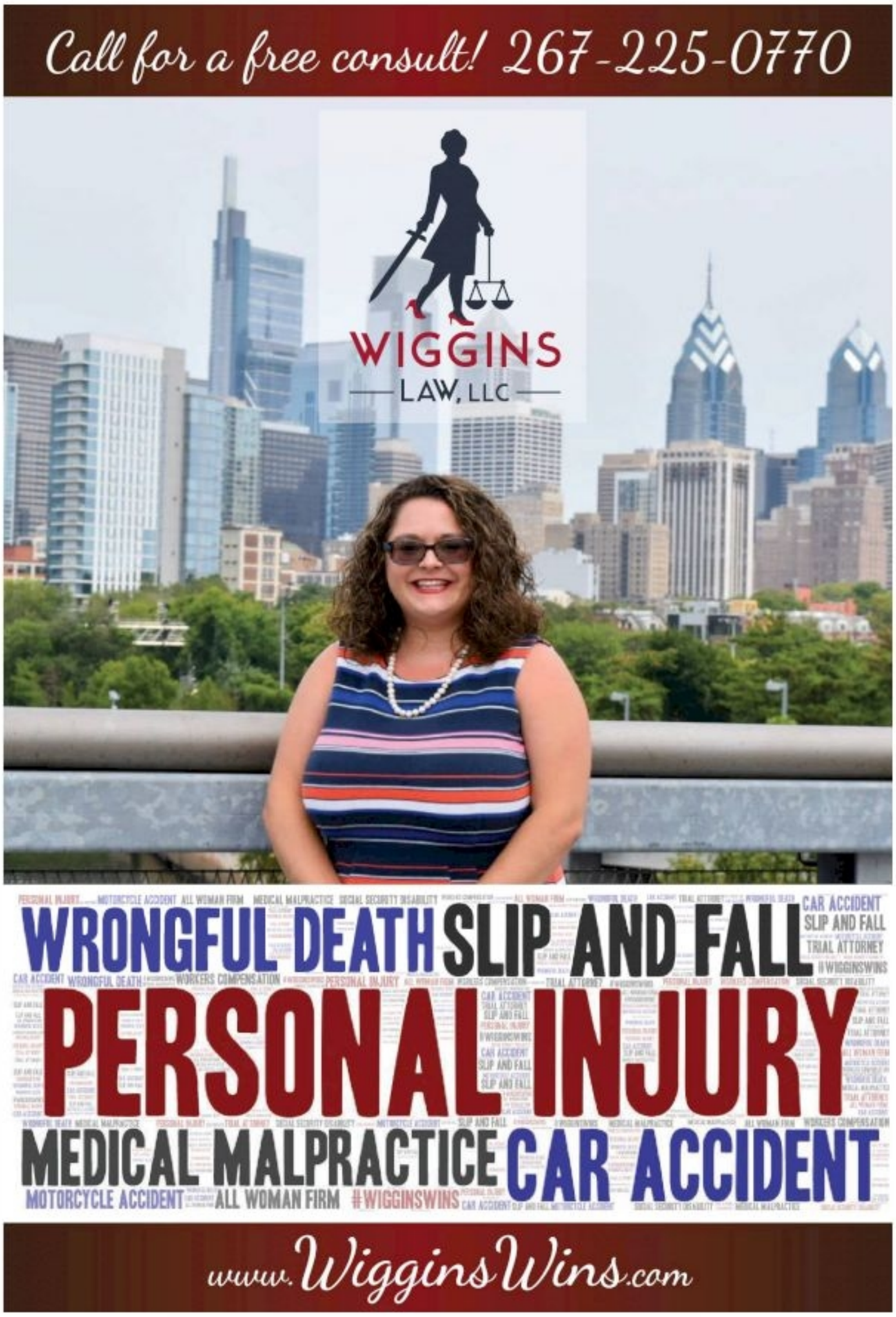
GETTY IMAGES

The Air Force is using SpaceX's fledgling satellite network to test encrypted internet services for a number of military planes, the space company's president said on Tuesday, detailing results for the first customer of Elon Musk's planned constellation of thousands of broadband-beaming satellites.

"We are delivering high bandwidth into the cockpit of Air Force planes," SpaceX President and Chief Operating Officer Gwynne Shotwell said on Tuesday. "Right now we're just testing the capability and figuring out how to make it work."

SpaceX's so-called Starlink constellation, a planned network of up to 30,000 satellites in low Earth orbit intended to beam broadband internet globally, is crucial to generating the cash to fund development of Musk's heavy-lift Mars rocket dubbed Starship.

The Air Force program, known as Global Lightning, started testing with SpaceX in early 2018 and used Starlink's first two test satellites to beam to terminals fixed to a C-12 military transport plane in flight. REUTERS



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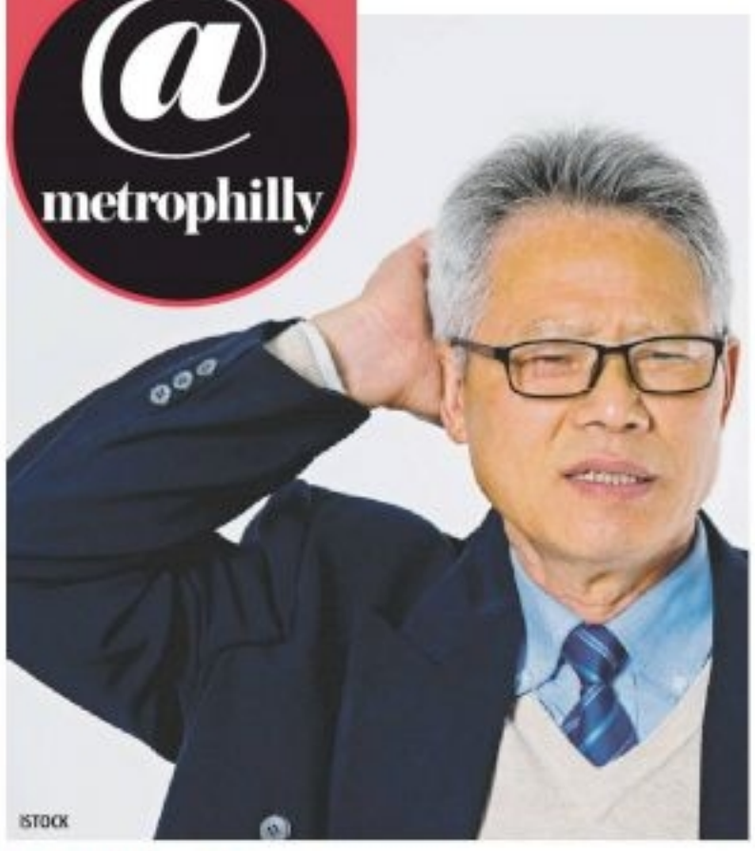

ISTOCK

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TECH GRUMBLE

I would like to thank the internet for kindly contacting me about my many ailments.

Yes, I suffer from knee pain, heavy mortgage, low libido, costly auto insurance, sagging skin, loss of hearing, nerve pain and chronic aches, snoring, obesity, bad credit, fungus (don't ask!) and a host of other maladies too numerous to mention. I do appreciate your reaching out, but can you offer me something for the pounding headache I now have after deleting all your emails?

Rollo, *Metro US reader*

the Grumble

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Don't jump into something without doing adequate research. Expand your mind, ask questions and offer suggestions that will ease whatever transition you face.

Taurus Take a leap of faith and see where you land. The journey that begins now will be a learning experience as well as a chance to gain ground mentally, physically and emotionally.

Gemini Be careful when dealing with sensitive issues. If you say something in jest, someone will take offense, leaving you in an awkward position.

Cancer Take part in something that interests you to expand your mind, challenge your body and enlighten your soul. A change of heart and direction will improve your life.

Leo Personal growth, physical improvements and getting things done on time should be your priorities. Don't follow someone else when you have your own responsibilities.

Virgo Unfamiliar surroundings will spark your imagination, and the people you encounter will offer information that will lead you to consider making a change.

Libra What you do for others will not be forgotten. If you need a favor, ask for it. An unexpected change will turn into a blessing in disguise.

Scorpio Hide your emotions from anyone prying into your business. If you show vulnerability, someone will use it against you. You'll come out ahead if you smile and conduct business as usual.

Sagittarius Look at the bright side of every situation to gain popularity. Offer positive suggestions and be open to new adventures. Prioritize personal growth and helping others.

Capricorn A change should encourage you to move forward instead of discouraging you. If you embrace whatever comes your way, unexpected rewards will follow. Live, love, laugh and be happy.

Aquarius Take a deep breath and set a comfortable pace. You don't have to keep up with anyone. Decide what's best for you and head in that direction.

Pisces Be a participant, a doer, a helper and an inspiration. How you project your self-image will determine what you get in return. A positive change will bring high returns. EUGENIA LAST

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The Philly POPS brings Halloweentown to The Met Philadelphia

See a live performance of Danny Elfman's score during "The Nightmare Before Christmas" Oct. 24 and 25.

MADELINE PRESLAND
letters@metro.us

What's this? "The Nightmare Before Christmas" at The Met? Live music? Costumes? Yes!

The Philly POPS bring good scares and the joy of Christmas to North Broad this week with a live-to-film concert featuring Tim Burton's iconic animated masterpiece. Danny Elfman's innovative score plays an essential role in creating the magical world in which holidays are created by towns of magical workers. "The Nightmare Before Christmas" became an instant classic after its release in 1993 and has a cult following that continues today. The story follows the adored Jack Skellington as he abandons his position of Pumpkin King in Halloweentown after discovering the spirit of Christmas and deciding that he would rather be Santa Claus. But he can't reinvent Christmas alone. He enlists the help of the entire town, including Sally the rag doll and a trio of not-so-helpful henchmen.

The Philly POPS celebrates this iconic Disney film by bringing Elfman's score to life while the film plays on the big screen at The Met Philadelphia this Thursday and Friday evening.

The score for this film is known for its rapidly paced numbers including "What's This?" and the powerfully spooky "This Is Halloween". The score also takes on a completely different energy with the swing style of "Oogie Boogie's Song" or Sally's soft ballads. A live performance is ambitious due to the mix of styles, but there are a couple of other challenges that will allow the orchestra and guest conductor Stuart Chafetz to really shine.

Celebrate Halloween with the Philly POPS and your favorite characters from Tim Burton's animated classic DISNEY CONCERTS

"Interestingly, ['The Nightmare Before Christmas'] is the first score I learned to conduct alongside a movie… so it was really hard," says Chafetz. "For this performance, you have to be so precise to accompany the singers and characters on screen. It's invigorating when it all works. It's actually the greatest compliment to hear the audience say they forgot there was an orchestra at all because it lines up so well."

Chafetz confessed that getting to know the score and discovering all of Elfman's musical Easter eggs made him fall in love with the film. The score both moves the storyline along and enhaces the precise details in the animation.

"It was like cracking a code," he laughs. "It takes time to go through it and figure it out. I love all the licks in 'What's This?'. It almost sounds like The Simpsons with all the fast runs. There's a real sparkle when you hear it and watch how Jack discovers Christmastown."

Clarinetist Joe Smith has played with the Philly POPS since the very beginning. As a musician with the orchestra for 40 years, Smith has seen the evolution of the performances. Expanding to The Met for the second time provides new opportunities for the POPS as well as this show being the venue's first full orchestral presentation.

"The Met provides a bigger space and we're really looking forward to performing in the 3,500 seat auditorium," says Smith. "It's a theater that was used for orchestras and recording in its old days, so it's a mix of history and taking a giant step forward."

This isn't just a concert. It's also a giant costume party to pay tribute to all of Tim Burton's iconic characters. The POPS encourage attendees to dress as their favorite character from one of Burton's films or wear another Halloween costume. As for whether Chafetz or any of the musicians end up wearing costumes at some point during the performances, you'll have to wait and see.

The Philly POPS presentation of "The Nightmare Before Christmas" runs for two performances on Oct. 24 and 25 at The Met Philadelphia. Tickets start at $29.95. Visit phillypops.org for more information and to purchase tickets.

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Sippin' on seltzer

Evil Genius Beer Company is now offering three new flavors of hard seltzers.

MOLLY GIVEN
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Fishtown hotspot Evil Genius is typically known for its colorful variety of tasty beers with eclectic names and unique flavors. But this week, the brewery has made a major announcement that will quench Philadelphians' thirst in a new and bubbly way.

That's right Philly, Evil Genius is now offering up a brand new collection of small-batch, locally made, all-natural hard seltzers in three retro flavors: grapefruit, lemon-lime and black cherry.

The hard seltzer craze has taken the country by storm in the past year, and although the summer months are gone, Evil Genius seized the opportunity to expand their market and have thirsty patrons enjoy the cool and refreshing flavors all year long. Just like the popular branded hard seltzers out on the market, Evil Genius' hard seltzers are gluten-free and low in calories but still wildy tasty.

"We really loved the idea of creating something new and different from beer. Our taproom in Philadelphia, while the vast majority of what we sell is beer, has seen a huge rise in the demand for hard seltzer. We love to create new things, and experiment, and saw this as an opportunity to do just that with something we could see our customers wanted," said Evil Genius partner Trevor Hayward in a release. "You don't always want to drink beer – and we get that. We also wanted to make something that wasn't overly sugary, kept calories in check for people who were counting and not compromise on flavor. We wanted a beverage that you can sip on all day without guilt or that sugar headache that some alternatives bring. It's also naturally gluten-free, so friendly to those who need or want to avoid gluten."

Evil Genius loves to package their products in an interesting way, and their seltzer is no different. Philadelphians can sip on any of the three flavored seltzers while feeling nostalgic with their '90s-essenced cans and labels.

"When someone picks up our beer, and now our seltzer, we want them to have an experience. It's not just about what's inside that can or bottle, it's about how it makes them feel, what it reminds them of, and how they think about it after they're finished. Everyone's experience will be different, but we hope they're reminded of a great childhood memory, enjoy the crisp and delicious taste and flavors, and come away feeling refreshed," added Evil Genius partner Luke Bowen in a release.

Head to Evil Genius to sample the new products. ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED

The delightful variety of hard seltzers are on sale now at Evil Genius for $19.99 a pack (multi-packs are available). By Nov. 4th however, the packs will also be available in local liquor stores and beer distributors in six states: PA, NJ, DE, CT, MD and RI. They will also be in MA by the end of November. Evil Genius will team up for the seltzer production with their contract brewing partner, Wyndridge Farm Brewing, based in York County, Pennsylvania.

To learn more about Evil Genius (1727 N Front St.) visit evilgeniusbeer.com

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Being the change

Director Deon Taylor talks hard-hitting new film "Black and Blue."

MOLLY GIVEN
Molly.Given@metro.us

What does it mean to follow a code to the point of moral unconsciousness? Where is the line blurred between loyalty and the bonds we have as human beings?

Those questions are what Deon Taylor examines with his latest crime thriller "Black and Blue," starring Naomie Harris and Tyrese Gibson. Taylor wanted the action-packed New Orleans-based film to hit hard with the explosive plotline but also act as a vehicle to start important conversations about those in power being held accountable.

Taylor sat down with Metro to talk about his inspirations for the film, his take on police officers' relationships in our country today and to give his take on why being the change is far more essential than ever before.

What first drew you to the film?

I remember reading the screenplay for the first time and a few things grabbed me. First, the involvement of the body cameras, and secondly, I also don't think I've ever seen a film with an African American female cop as the lead. That stuck with me, it really grabbed me. This is the first film where it's a much bigger movie than just me. The screenplay, the culture and what I've lived and have been through — just those nuances that are now in the DNA of "Black and Blue" really made me fall all the way in love with the film.

How did you decide on Naomie Harris for the role of Alicia West?

I'm already a bit unorthodox when it comes to casting — I really like people that play against type. But this movie is different. When I started to listen to actors that people thought were really good for the film, I just didn't think it would work for whatever reason. Somebody said Naomie Harris' name once, and I remember going "That's her." It was actually that fast. [She] is what we needed for this type of film. You have to have an actress that can speak to the audience without uttering a word — and she does that. She has to be vulnerable, she has to fall down, get hurt, cry, move and still be powerful and command the screen.

Why was the line between right and wrong blurred so easily for the other characters?

Frank Grillo's character has a monologue at the end that I really like a lot, it's very powerful. If you aren't so engrossed in the action and you listen to what he's saying, he basically is talking about a corrupt city. Post-Katrina, everybody left and there was almost a post-apocalyptic war that was there where people were running rampant. There really was no law and cops that were patrolling those areas needed to do whatever they could to survive. In this movie, that's how he was policing. I'm from Gary, Indiana in the Chicago area and there was plenty of corruption there with cops, even with gangs. Bribes, drugs — this is normal in a lot of cities. I believe that Frank Grillo and those other characters really embody cops that went down the wrong path and went rogue operating under their own code. The beautiful and artistic part of the film comes together at the end — the whole theme of the film is "be the change." Naomie Harris' character fights to be that change.

Deon Taylor with Tyrese Gibson on set of "Black and Blue." SONY PICTURES

What do you hope audiences take away from the film?

I think "Black and Blue" is a completely different experience — it's a movie that is a hybrid. My idea behind the movie was to give you the same energy that you get in "Training Day" and "Sicario," but I wanted those moments where I can say something to you. When things like Atatiana Jefferson being shot happen — normally everyone mums the word, no one has anything to say. The reality is there is a cop standing behind the cop who saw everything. What I want to say to you in between this incredible rollercoaster ride is very simple: have integrity as a human, say what you saw and be the change.*"Black and Blue" hits theaters Oct. 25.*

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Lizzy Caplan and Tim Robbins on bringing 'Misery' to 'Castle Rock'

Season 2 of the Stephen King Hulu anthology series premieres today.

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Last year, Stephen King fans were treated to a reimagining of his famed eerie town with Hulu's "Castle Rock." While that season deepened the mystery of that quiet Maine town with a trip back to Shawshank prison, Season 2 of the show follows a different beloved narrative with a prequel to "Misery," with Lizzy Caplan taking on the iconic role of Annie Wilkes, which earned Kathy Bates an Oscar for her portrayal in the 1990 classic film.

In this new story, we catch up with Wilkes as she is driving around the country with her daughter Joy (played by Elsie Fisher of "Eighth Grade") as she changes identities in order to find work as a nurse to steal prescription medication in order to combat her mental illness. The two find themselves stranded in the town of Castle Rock when they run into car trouble and Annie is forced to find work at the local hospital in order to raise money to leave, as well as get the pills she needs. As we follow her, the reasons why she and her daughter are on the run become more clear as we get a peek inside one of King's most complex characters.

For Caplan, getting to play one of her favorite characters in both film and literature was a surreal thrill.

"One of the most interesting things about Stephen King," says Caplan, "is that, obviously he's an author, but because his books have spawned so many classic films, there's this mix of the books together and the films in everybody's minds. 'Misery' being a prime example. That book and that film are so intertwined that it's hard to separate Annie from what Kathy Bates did. So much so that, I was recently on a road trip and I was listening to an audio tape of 'Misery' and the woman reading the audio book was flipping into Kathy Bates-type vocal inflections!"

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All of this history surrounding the character of Annie Wilkes just made Caplan want to take extra strides to do her story justice.

"I just knew that this character was very unlike anything I had played before and I wanted it to feel very different. For me, on set, I didn't want to recognize any part of myself in who this character was. As a fan of the book and a huge fan of the film, that was the Annie Wilkes that is seared into my brain. I think it would be off-putting for me as a viewer to try to create something that couldn't feasibly be a prequel to the story we all know and love."

Both Wilkes and her daughter get taken in by "Ace" Merrill (Paul Sparks), the heir to the Merrill crime family that runs the town of Castle Rock. Merill's dying father, Pop, is played by an actor who was involved with one of King's most iconic film adaptations, Tim Robbins. I asked Robbins how it felt to be

invited back to explore Castle Rock nearly 25 years since the release of "The Shawshank Redemption."

"It's such a different universe than the other Stephen King thing I've done," says Robbins. "But that's a testament to him as a writer. He's so multifaceted as a writer."

That of course, is absolutely what makes this show such a pleasure for longtime fans. Although King may be regarded as a master of suspense, he sometimes does not get the recognition he deserves for the vast emotional territory he has been able to inhabit as a writer. This is something that Robbins has always respected and been drawn to as a fan.

"He's always had an understanding of not only the darkness of humanity but to be able to write those novels that scare the hell out of you and then write the different novellas. It's that thing where historians are always like, 'How is it possible that Shakespeare wrote 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and 'Hamlet?' They're two wildly different plays! One's a comedy and one is one of the greatest tragedies of all-time.' Look at Stephen King. He does it all the time," says Robbins.

There are many different callbacks and references to classic works in the author's oeuvre, though one in particular will be a welcome surprise for fans of his seasonal horror classics. To reveal it here would, of course, be an unredeemable spoiler. But knowing that fans of "Misery" will be able to follow the story of Annie Wilkes one more time is satisfying enough for now. By using her as the focal point and the anti-hero of this story, we get to see her piece together the evils of the town, even as those around her question her judgement.

"I was excited by the notion of an extremely unreliable narrator being the protagonist," says Caplan of playing the historically unhinged character. "It's a very ambitious thing to do to show the audience this totally bonkers world and then your way in [as the audience] also happens to be this totally bonkers human being."

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MATT BURKE

Matt Burke is a veteran sports journalist and the Founder and Editor in Chief of MetroBet.

Before we get to the Sixers - Celtics betting preview, I should tell you about our new, exclusive $500 free cash offer.

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The championship-driven Sixers open up with a stiff test right out of the gate as the Celtics invade Wells Fargo Center tonight in both teams' season openers.

On paper the Sixers have a better roster this season than the Celtics, particularly when you factor in that Elton Brand swiped Al Horford from the grips of Danny Ainge this past summer. And most people would agree that Kemba Walker is at least a hair worse than Kyrie Irving.

That said, Celtics coach Brad Stevens has absolutely owned Brett Brown ever since the Sixers began, ya know, trying to win basketball games.

Since the start of the 2017-18 season, Stevens' Celtics are 10-3 (including playoffs) against Brown's Sixers. Horford was a big part of the Celtics' success against the Sixers as he seemingly had the secret sauce when it came to handling Joel Embiid.

GETTY IMAGES

Now, the Celtics have absolutely no answer for Embiid in the paint – as defense in the front court is a glaring weakness for Boston. The C's will trot out Enes Kanter (an offensive specialist), Robert Williams (second year big man), and Tacko Fall (an eight-foot tall beanpole) to try and stop Embiid down low, and they will almost assuredly fail.

But here's saying that Stevens, who has been been ruminating in a bunker filled with milk and cookies somewhere following the Celtics' flame out last spring, will come up with a stringent defensive game plan against the Sixers. Boston, which was not a great defensive team last season, held the Sixers to a measly 87 points in the season opener last season. The Celtics also have excellent wing defenders that could make up some difference.

Meanwhile, the Sixers' 'D' could be historically great – which is why the total looks tasty here. Until we start to get a grasp on trends this NBA season, it's probably wise to stay away from the spread and look to Over – Unders.

The play: Sixers – Celtics Under 217.5 points (-115)

TWEET OF THE DAY

Bill Barnwell
@billbarnwell

2019: Sam Darnold sees ghost in Patriots defense

2020: Titans sign ghost to four-year, $54 million deal

2022: Titans cut ghost

2023: Patriots sign ghost for league minimum and he produces Pro Bowl season

Best bets

NFL Week 8 betting: Chargers at Bears

Under bettors shouldn't hesitate to place their wagers on Sunday's tilt between the Los Angeles Chargers and Chicago Bears.

Not even the most pessimistic projections had the Chargers averaging 20 points per game (22nd in the league) going into Week 8. Running back Melvin Gordon has not made the impact many thought he would since ending his holdout, averaging just 2.3 yards per carry on 36 attempts. His goal-line fumble cost his team a win against the Titans in Week 7. Philip Rivers should experience difficulty moving the chains against the Bears' fourth-rated defense by yards allowed per play. Chicago's offense has looked completely inept at times, ranking 30th in passing yards per game and 26th in rushing yards per game. L.A., seventh in first downs allowed this season, should stymie Mitchell Trubisky and company at Soldier Field.

ROBERT CRISCOLA

Betting trends also point to the Under, as the Chargers have gone below the total in five of their last six overall and seven of their last nine October tilts. The Under is 5-1 in the Bears' last six home games and 8-3 in their last 11 overall.

The play: Chargers - Bears Under 40 points (+100)

VSIN DAILY LINE

NFL WEEK 8

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES AT BUFFALO BILLS -2.5

NEW YORK JETS AT JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS -6

CAROLINA PANTHERS AT SAN FRAN 49ERS -5.5

CLEVELAND BROWNS AT NE PATRIOTS -13

OAKLAND RAIDERS AT HOUSTON TEXANS -6.5

NBA

BOSTON CELTICS AT PHILADELPHIA 76ERS -5.5

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SPORTS

A new process awaits: Sixers eye trip to NBA Finals in 2019-20

The 76ers have put together one of the best starting fives in the NBA. Will it be enough to get to the Finals?

JOVAN ALFORD
sports@metro.us

The 76ers have their sights on much more than a playoff appearances this season. GETTY IMAGES

Last season, the Philadelphia 76ers were three unfortunate bounces away from advancing to the Eastern Conference Finals to face the Milwaukee Bucks.

Unlike in previous seasons, where the Sixers were looking to stock up on draft capital and trusting the process, Philadelphia's front office made two unexpected blockbuster trades for Jimmy Butler and Tobias Harris.

No one expected the Sixers to land either of them, especially since they failed to acquire two-way superstar Kawhi Leonard during that offseason.

Nevertheless, the Sixers' decision to go all in and it actually paid off. They received two players that not only added a different dimension to the team, but there was a possibility that they could be back for the foreseeable future.

Also, Joel Embiid and Ben Simmons took the next steps in their careers last season as both guys were named to the NBA All-Star game.

With all that being said, the possibility of Butler, Embiid, Harris, and Simmons running the NBA's Eastern Conference was becoming a tantalizing idea. But that was not the case when NBA free agency rolled around at the end of June.

Butler shockingly took his talents to the Miami Heat in a four-team trade that netted the Sixers 26-year-old guard Josh Richardson. Harris, on the other hand, signed a five-year max deal with Philadelphia.

Along with those moves, the Sixers also went out and signed former Boston Celtics big man Al Horford to a four-year deal and brought back key bench players from last season.

After all these moves, what should fans keep an eye out for this season? Here are three storylines to focus on as the Sixers try to capture the NBA crown:

THE MATURATION OF EMBIID AND SIMMONS

As previously stated, both Embiid and Simmons took gigantic leaps last season en route to helping the Sixers reached the ECSF.

Last season, Embiid — who was looking like an MVP candidate early on — averaged a career-high 27.5 points and 13.6 rebounds in 33.7 minutes per game.

While Simmons just missed out on averaging a triple-double in only his second season, the former first overall pick averaged 16.9 points, 8.8 rebounds, and 7.7 assists in 34.2 minutes per game.

While those numbers were fantastic, the Sixers are going to need this and more, if they don't want to experience heartbreak again this postseason.

For starters, Philadelphia needs to hope that Embiid can stay healthy throughout the season. In last year's playoffs, we saw Embiid not at 100-percent, which hindered the Sixers to a certain extent.

With the additions of Horford and Kyle O'Quinn, expect to see the term 'load management' next to Embiid's name a lot this season.

Finally, when it comes to Simmons, the only thing that he was missing from his arsenal was a jump shot. In the preseason, we saw the young point guard take and easily make a three-point shot.

If he can consistently take 3-4 shots per game this season, it will help the Sixers' offense tremendously.

WHO IS THE BACKUP POINT GUARD?

In last year's playoffs, we saw head coach Brett Brown use Jimmy Butler as the team's backup point guard. The move was unorthodox because it had Simmons playing off-ball more, but gave the team another competent ball handler.

But since there is no more Butler, Brown will once again have to take an unorthodox approach, despite the team having Trey Burke, Shake Milton, and Raul Neto.

Out of those three players listed, Milton might see the most time at backup point guard. But Brown will more than likely lean on Richardson to be the backup to Simmons, especially during playoff time.

SIXERS FIND ANOTHER LATE FIRST-ROUND GEM

Last season, it was Landry Shamet who was drafted late in the first round. And this season, it appears as if the Sixers have found another late first-round prospect in Matisse Thybulle.

Coming out of the University of Washington, Thybulle was known for his defensive abilities and prowess with a respectable three-point shot. In his senior season, he had an insane defensive rating of 88.

That being said, the 6-foot-5 wing player has exceeded those expectations and should have a viable role off of the bench.

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2019-20 NBA predictions: Clippers will win first-ever title in new-look league

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- TORONTO RAPTORS*
- BOSTON CELTICS*
- BROOKLYN NETS*
- INDIANA PACERS*
- MIAMI HEAT*
- ORLANDO MAGIC*
- CHICAGO BULLS
- DETROIT PISTONS
- WSH. WIZARDS
- ATLANTA HAWKS
- CHARLOTTE HORNETS
- NEW YORK KNICKS
- CLEVELAND CAVALIERS

WESTERN CONFERENCE PREDICTIONS

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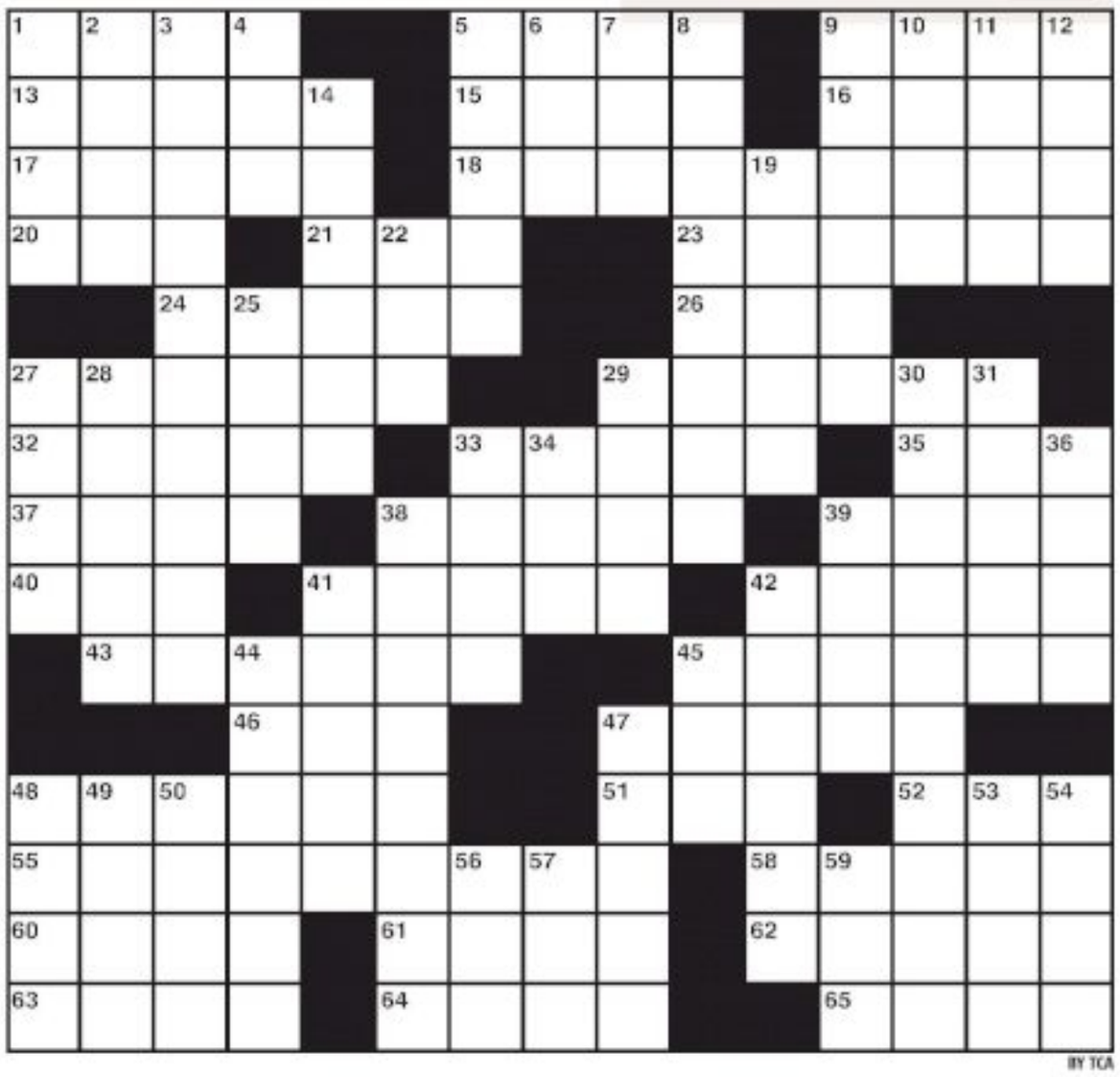
18 Comedians' partners
20 Little child
21 Compete
23 Abhor
24 Build
26 Whopper
27 Pet bird
29 Arranges
32 In the know
33 __ in; inundated by
35 Capture
37 Not bananas
38 Damages irreparably
39 Farm building
40 Moral transgression
41 After-dinner candies
42 __ about; praised highly
43 Oppressive ruler
45 Place to buy bread & pie
46 Two months ago: abbr.
47 Be indecisive
48 Like a piercing scream
51 Small bill
52 Knight's title
55 Mentor
58 Innocent
60 Suffix for suit or wash
61 Huge amount, slangily
62 Hell's ruler
63 Three-__ sloth
64 Argument
65 "Auld Lang __"

DOWN

1 In __; jokingly
2 Mr. Preminger
3 Folk singers' gathering
4 180 degrees from SSE
5 Rattled
6 Skater Babilonia
7 Connecting word
8 __ of; paying no attention to
9 Hits hard
10 Scalp problem
11 Printer supplies
12 Haze
14 Harsh
19 Actor Brian
22 Like slick winter roads
25 Uncommon
27 Late singer Mama __
28 Look for with expectation
29 Without
30 Brown or Rice
31 Not as vivid in color
33 Family tree member
34 To __; namely
36 "Over my dead __!"
38 Curls
39 "Oh, for Pete's __!"
41 Manhandles
42 Black glossy birds
44 __ cats and dogs; poured
45 Embargo
47 Most terrible
48 "Beat it!"
49 Tramp
50 Reign
53 Lendl of tennis
54 Actress Russo
56 __ off; sever
57 __ mission; driven
59 Community coll. degrees



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7	5				2	3		

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Alliance for Audited Media

Let us help you and your child develop healthy habits for a healthy life!

Researchers at Temple University are conducting a research study to learn more about how improving children's sleep, eating, and activity behaviors affects their weight status and overall health.

To be eligible your child must:
Be 6 – 11 years old
Sleep 9.5 hours or less each night

All families will learn how to improve their child's sleep.
Some families will also learn strategies for improving eating and activity behaviors. Families who are eligible and enroll in the study will be compensated for their time.

Please call 215-707-5782 to see if you and your child qualify for this study or scan this code from your mobile device:

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY
College of Public Health

SLEEP FOR HEALTH
All kids deserve to be happy and healthy!